

CAREGIVER NEWSLETTER



Campaign for Inclusive Care

Written by Courtney Schoenfeld, LCSW

"The best chance for a wounded warrior to recover and thrive is having a strong, well-supported caregiver"

- 2014 RAND Report -

The Campaign for Inclusive Care is a joint initiative between the Elizabeth Dole Foundation (EDF) and the Dept of Veterans Affairs that began in 2018. As you can find on the Elizabeth Dole Foundation website, the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is the largest integrated healthcare system in the country. According to recent surveys conducted with EDF and partners, over 25% of VHA enrollees reported needing the support of a caregiver. These caregivers are spouses, parents, family members and friends of Veterans who are taking on a variety of caregiving tasks to include personal care, supervision, protection, instruction and safety, as well as managing household tasks.

The Campaign for Inclusive Care was therefore designed to integrate caregivers into their Veteran's health care team from the FIRST visit, if possible,

and to make inclusive care the **standard of care** in our health care system.

The EDF states, "The goal is to improve outcomes for Veterans, their caregivers and their healthcare providers."

The Campaign for Inclusive Care seeks to move from caregiver support to **caregiver integration**.

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U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
VA Portland Health Care System

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HOW to engage in Inclusive Care?

Visit the [Academy for Inclusive Care](#).

This is a public facing website option where a person can log on to the Inclusive Care TRAIN platform to access the trainings. The Academy for Inclusive Care contains 4 training modules. Each module is a video of around 15 minutes in length. The content includes: “*What is Inclusive Care*”, “*Who are Military and Veteran Caregivers*”, “*Communicating with the Caregiver*”, and “*Understanding the Caregiver Journey and Caregiver Journey Map*”. At the end of these modules you will learn how you can implement the CARE acronym into your practice. The CARE acronym stands for:

C-Consider who should be present with the Veteran at their appointments?

A-Acknowledge the caregiving work and needs of the Veteran.

R-Review Role of what tasks the caregiver is doing/performing for the Veteran and their lives.

E-Encourage the caregiver and Veteran to seek resources and supports, often with VHA’s Caregiver Support Program.

WHY should we engage in Inclusive Care?

Inclusive care can truly bring satisfaction to the Veteran and their caregiver as they feel heard and listened to. Supported caregivers, in a healthcare setting, feel less isolation, strain and fewer adverse outcomes in their own health. Veterans are more likely to thrive when their caregivers are engaged and empowered in their healthcare. Healthcare providers are able to deliver efficient and effective high quality of care when they embrace the caregiver in the Veteran’s treatment plan. There is reduction in repetition of work for the Veteran, the caregiver and the healthcare provider. Lastly, in the bigger picture, society benefits from caregivers being embraced in Inclusive Care by seeing lower healthcare costs overall, which in turn benefits communities and workplaces across the nation.



Can you commit to taking the Academy for Inclusive Care trainings? YES!

If you should have further questions about the Campaign for Inclusive Care, please reach out to VA Portland Caregiver Support Program by calling Courtney Schoenfeld, Caregiver Support Coordinator at 503-220-8262 extension 32029 or by calling our **VA Portland Caregiver Support Resource Line at 503-273-5210**.



CAREGIVER SPOTLIGHT

Let's get to know

SUSAN

My Veteran's Name: Gary

Branch of Service: Army

82nd Airborne, Vietnam January 1967-January 1968



I have been a Caregiver since January 2017, through July 2018, when Gary died, at home, right where we both wanted him to be.

I enjoy getting outdoors, woods, forests, mountains, lakes, rivers, camping, cross country skiing, hiking. It's actually deeply important to me to "get out of town" to connect with things that help me find balance in my life, and reset my purpose in life.

Also, thanks to Gary, riding my Harley, which he gave me and made sure I learned how to ride

What's important to me? It's deeply important to me to fulfill the two promises I've made to Gary:

First, the promise I made to him when we got married, to love, honor and cherish him, until death us do part. In fact, I've found my love, appreciation, and respect for him is not bounded by death.

Second, the promise I made to him when he said the thing that worried him most about dying was how I would do after his death, and I promised him I would be well. This means being well, and doing well, enjoying my life, and doing good for others, as he did.

My favorite part about being a Caregiver is the love increased between us as we took care of each other.

I take care of myself (and my family) by getting out of town when I can, doing what I enjoy, hiking, cross country skiing, camping.

I would like other Caregivers to know it's vitally important to take care of yourself.

As Gary said: "If you don't take care of yourself, who will take care of me?"

I always thought many women would be happy to fill in for me, but I knew he wanted it to be me.



WHOLE HEALTH CORNER

Mindfulness in Everyday Living

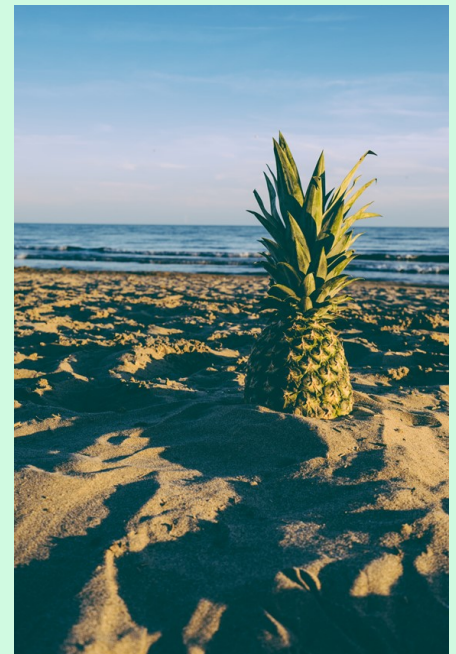
Written by Amanda Walker, LCSW

What is mindfulness? Why should we do it?

John Kabat Zinn, PhD, describes mindfulness as “paying attention in a certain way, on purpose, in the present moment, non-judgmentally”. Dr. Zinn is the creator of the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program used at the VA, which is an evidence-based program determined to be helpful in the treatment of depression, anxiety, PTSD, addiction, chronic pain, insomnia, high blood pressure, and inflammation in the body. It really is a wonderful practice!

There are many ways to be mindful, and we can choose to practice mindfulness in the way that is most relatable and natural to us personally. Some people focus on their breathing. When you are standing in line at the grocery store, driving your car, or sitting down after a long day, you can take a few moments to notice your breathing. Do you feel your breath in your chest or your stomach? Is your breathing deep or shallow? Fast or slow? Try to pay attention to your breathing for at least 10 breaths sometime during your day.

Some people like to mindfully wash their dishes, noticing the temperature of the water and the feeling of the suds on their hands. Some people choose to mindfully pet their dog or cat, focusing on the soft feeling of their fur and the sound of their pet breathing or purring. Some people mindfully listen to their loved ones, closely paying attention, without interrupting or thinking about what they plan to say next. What ways can you think of to practice mindfulness in your everyday life?



CAREGIVER RESOURCES

Trained professional Veteran Service Officers (VSO) provide free services meant to educate and assist Veterans and their dependents with:

- Understanding VA benefits such as employment, education, burial, housing, and various other benefits.
- Information and guidance with filing claims.

Oregon Veterans Service Officers

<https://www.oregon.gov/odva/Services/Pages/County-Services.aspx>

Washington Veterans Service Officers

<https://dev-dva-internet.pantheonsite.io/resources/county-map>

VETERAN SERVICE OFFICERS

- The Caregiver Support Line (CSL) monthly education calls provide a showcase of topics to educate and support caregiver of Veterans. Professional CSL social workers deliver the presentations and facilitate discussions based on the caregiver's comments and questions, thereby, making it an interactive learning experience.
- Caregivers have the option to attend the presentation one of three different times during the month.

**Call (503) 273-5210
to register.**

VA Caregiver Support Line Monthly Telephone Education Presentation

- July 2021– Let's Talk About Money: Managing Your Financial Reality
- August 2021– Healing the Wounds of Inner Shame
- September 2021– Palliative Care: Improving the Quality of Life for Caregivers and Veterans with Chronic Illness

CAREGIVER SUPPORT

Happy Summer, Family Caregivers!

The following is a bright, fresh and fun alternative to dessert-
The Rainbow Fruit Salad!



For a healthier version of this salad, you may want to substitute vanilla yogurt for the cream cheese topping!



Ingredients

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 2 large firm bananas, sliced | 1 pint fresh strawberries, halved |
| 2 tablespoons lemon juice | 6 ounces cream cheese, softened |
| 2 cups seeded cubed watermelon | 1/3 cup confectioners' sugar |
| 2 cups fresh or canned pineapple chunks | 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice |
| 1 pint fresh blueberries | 1/2 teaspoon grated lime zest |
| 3 kiwifruit, peeled and sliced | 1 cup heavy whipping cream, whipped |

Directions

-  Toss bananas in lemon juice; place in a 4-qt. glass serving bowl. Add remaining fruit in layers.
-  In a bowl, beat cream cheese until smooth. Gradually add sugar and the lime juice and zest. Stir in a small amount of whipped cream; mix well. Fold in remaining whipped cream. Spread over fruit. Chill until serving.

NUTRITION FACTS & SOURCE VISIT:

[Rainbow Fruit Salad Recipe: How to Make It | Taste of Home](#)

We invite you to practice mindfully eating your Rainbow Fruit Salad. You can do this by enjoying one piece of fruit at a time. Notice the color, scent, texture and flavor of each individual fruit. Take a bit of the topping and enjoy a bit of that on its own. Next, notice what it is like to eat a piece of fruit with some topping it, and so forth.

Wishing you and yours a healthy and vibrant summer!

~Amber



VIRTUAL GROUPS & CLASSES

Mindful Resilience Yoga

2:00 - 3:00 p.m. every Friday

Contact Judy Ulibarri to register

(971) 373-3928

Guided Rest

10:30 - 11:30 a.m. every Friday

A 60-minute guided relaxation for full body relaxation while remaining awake.

Join by calling 1(872) 701-0185
access code is 708 548 543#

Drop-in Support Group

10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. every other Wednesday starting June 2

Open to all caregivers of Veterans. Supporting caregivers in a confidential space to share their stories, learn self-care practices, and promote health and well-being.

To register call the Caregiver Support Resource Line at the number listed below.

See all VA Portland Caregiver class details at

www.portland.va.gov/Caregiver_Classes_Events_VA_Portland

Need Support?

**Call the Portland Caregiver Support Program Resource Line
(503) 273-5210**

Your local Caregiver Support Coordinator (CSC) is a licensed professional who can support you by matching you with services for which you are eligible, and providing you with valuable information about resources that can help you remain smart, strong and organized as you care for your Veteran.

